



Ohio Department of Agriculture  
and  
Ohio Department of Health



**Governor** Ted Strickland  
**Lieutenant Governor** Lee Fisher

**ODA Director** Robert J. Boggs  
**ODH Director** Alvin D. Jackson, M.D.

To: Health Commissioners, Environmental Health Directors, Nursing Directors, ODA Food Safety Specialists, and Other Interested Parties

Subject: FDA Cautions Consumers Regarding Products Distributed By PETCO

Date: June 20, 2008

***FDA Requests Seizure of Animal Food Products at PETCO Distribution Center***

At the request of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U.S. Marshals seized various animal food products stored under unsanitary conditions at the PETCO Animal Supplies Distribution Center located in Joliet, Ill., pursuant to a warrant issued by the United States District Court in Chicago.

U.S. Marshals seized all FDA-regulated animal food susceptible to rodent and pest contamination. The seized products violate the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act because it was alleged in a case filed by the United States Attorney that they were being held under unsanitary conditions. (The Act uses the term "insanitary" to describe such conditions).

During an FDA inspection of a PETCO distribution center in April, widespread and active rodent and bird infestation was found. The FDA inspected the facility again in May and found continuing and widespread infestation.

"We simply will not allow a company to store foods under filthy and unsanitary conditions that occur as a direct result of the company's failure to adequately control and prevent pests in its facility," said Margaret O'K. Glavin, associate commissioner for regulatory affairs. "Consumers expect that such safeguards will be in place not only for human food, but for pet food as well."

The distribution center in Joliet, Ill., provides pet food products and supplies to PETCO retail stores in 16 states including Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, **Ohio**, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin.

***FDA has no reports of pet illness or death associated with consumption of animal food distributed by PETCO, and does not have evidence that the food is unsafe for animals. However, the seized products were in permeable packages and held under conditions that could affect the food's integrity and quality.***

***As a precaution, consumers who have handled products originating from the PETCO distribution center should thoroughly wash their hands with hot water and soap. Any surfaces that came in contact with the packages should be washed as well. Consumers are further advised as a precaution to thoroughly wash products sold in cans and glass containers from PETCO in the 16 affected states.***

***If a pet has become ill after eating these food products, pet owners should contact their veterinarian and report illnesses to FDA state consumer complaint coordinators.***